

hammer out such an agreement and so the regulatory process is clearly in place, once such an agreement is reached. The Coordinator's Office is already involved in a host of discussions and actions relating to a pipeline and the pace is likely to quicken in coming months, provided the office has the expertise it needs to provide technical information to further a project.

I hope the Senate and the Congress will review and approve this bill quickly.

The Alaska gas line project is too important for this Nation's energy future, for our energy security, for our national security and for our balance of payments deficit for it to be delayed needlessly. These changes will likely speed the process of proceeding with a pipeline.

By Ms. STABENOW (for herself and Mr. DOMENICI):

S. 1090. A bill to amend the Agriculture and Consumer Protection Act of 1973 to assist the neediest of senior citizens by modifying the eligibility criteria for supplemental foods provided under the commodity supplemental food program to take into account the extraordinarily high out-of-pocket medical expenses that senior citizens pay, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

Ms. STABENOW. Mr. President, I rise today to introduce the Senior Nutrition Act, which will make needed improvements to the Commodity Supplemental Food Program to prevent our seniors from having to make the terrible choice between food and medicine as they try to balance their budgets.

I am pleased to have the support of my friend, Senator DOMENICI of New Mexico, who has been one of the Senate's strongest supporters of CSFP.

Nationally, 32 States and the District of Columbia participate in CSFP, which works to improve the health of both women with children and seniors by supplementing their diets with nutritious USDA commodity foods. According to USDA, nearly half a million people each month participated in CSFP during fiscal year 2006, with the overwhelming majority being seniors.

My State of Michigan has one of the largest and oldest CSFP network in the Nation. Last year, over 80,000 people in Michigan benefited from this important program.

The bill I am introducing today will make the following important changes to CSFP.

First, categorical eligibility is granted for seniors for CSFP if the individual participates or is eligible to participate in the Food Stamp Program. No further verification of income would be necessary in such cases. The Food Stamp Program provides a medical expense deduction, which seniors may use to account for their high prescription drug costs.

Second, this bill says that the same income standard that is currently used

to determine eligibility for women, infants and children in CSFP 185 percent of the Poverty Income Guidelines—would be applied to seniors as well. The current income eligibility standard for seniors has been capped at just 130 percent. Under the current Federal poverty guidelines, a single senior cannot earn more than \$13,273 per year to qualify. By raising the standard to 185 percent of poverty, the same senior can earn as much as \$18,888 to qualify for food. This will make a major difference in the lives of so many seniors who are struggling with the high cost of prescription drugs.

This bill has been endorsed by the National CSFP Association and America's Second Harvest. I ask unanimous consent that a copy of these support letters be printed in the RECORD following my remarks.

There being no objection, the letters were ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

NATIONAL CSFP ASSOCIATION,
March 19, 2007.

Hon. DEBBIE STABENOW
U.S. Senate,
Washington, DC.

DEAR SENATOR STABENOW: Thank you for your continuing support of the Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP) which provides an important buffer for our vulnerable children and seniors each month. Your support has made a tremendous difference and we appreciate your tireless efforts.

The National CSFP Association strongly supports your efforts to re-introduce and pass the Senior Nutrition Act and will work diligently to see that it happens this year. As you know, 91% of our recipients are now seniors living below 130% of Federal Poverty Level. For a household of one, this is only a maximum of \$1,062 per month. While some changes have been made in Medicare to help seniors buy prescriptions, the rising medical and fuel costs are still of great concern to those on fixed incomes and many of those seniors qualifying for food stamps due to medical cost deductions will lose the deductions to income and subsequently their food stamps.

By amending the eligibility criteria for seniors served by CSFP through the Senior Nutrition Act, the neediest of seniors will continue to receive nutrition assistance, which is crucial if they are to remain in good health.

Again, thank you for championing the causes of our nation's elderly.

Sincerely,

FRANK KUBIK,
President.

AMERICA'S SECOND HARVEST,
THE NATION'S FOOD BANK NETWORK,
March 27, 2007.

Hon. DEBBIE STABENOW,
U.S. Senate,
Washington, DC.

DEAR SENATOR STABENOW: I am writing on behalf of the more than 200 food banks and approximately 50,000 emergency feeding organizations that are part of America's Second Harvest—The Nation's Food Bank Network, to thank you for your continuing support for the Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP) and your persistent efforts to improve the nutrition and health of millions of this nation's elderly.

With approximately 27 percent of our food bank members distributing nutritious food boxes through the CSFP, we know how very necessary it is to expand this program so

that it can reach more of the nation's needy seniors. Strengthening the nutrition safety net for older Americans is a matter of paramount importance as this population grows and ages.

We strongly endorse the Senior Nutrition Act and support your and Senator Domenici's effort to expand the number of elderly eligible for the program by broadening the income eligibility standards and permitting categorical eligibility for seniors who participate in or are eligible to participate in the Food Stamp Program.

As you know, the CSFP provides critical nutrients to supplement the diets of thousands of low-income elderly who could not replace this food at the same low price as that provided by the CSFP food package. Moreover, as you are aware, this program also helps to support our nation's farmers who grow the food that feeds this needy population, along with millions of others who depend on our country's food and nutrition programs.

We are very grateful for your efforts to expand eligibility for this important program and for the contribution you have always made in waging the war against hunger in America. Thank you very much.

Sincerely,

VICKI ESCARRA,
President and CEO.

AMENDMENTS SUBMITTED AND PROPOSED

SA 840. Mr. HARKIN (for Mr. LUGAR) proposed an amendment to the resolution S. Res. 76, calling on the United States Government and the international community to promptly develop, fund, and implement a comprehensive regional strategy in Africa to protect civilians, facilitate humanitarian operations, contain and reduce violence, and contribute to conditions for sustainable peace in eastern Chad, northern Central African Republic, and Darfur, Sudan.

SA 841. Mr. HARKIN (for Mr. LUGAR) proposed an amendment to the resolution S. Res. 76, supra.

TEXT OF AMENDMENTS

SA 840. Mr. HARKIN (for Mr. LUGAR) proposed an amendment to the resolution S. Res. 76, calling on the United States Government and the international community to promptly develop, fund, and implement a comprehensive regional strategy in Africa to protect civilians, facilitate humanitarian operations, contain and reduce violence, and contribute to conditions for sustainable peace in eastern Chad, northern Central African Republic, and Darfur, Sudan; as follows:

On page 5, after line 25, insert the following:

(6) urges the Government of the Central African Republic—

(A) to engage in constructive and inclusive dialogue with rebels in the northwestern region of the country;

(B) to hold accountable security forces engaging in human rights violations; and

(C) to strengthen government services in order to meet the needs of affected populations;

On page 6, line 1 strike “(6)” and insert “(7)”.

On page 6, lines 1 and 2, strike “advocate for the appointment of” and insert “urge the United Nations Security Council to appoint”.

On page 6, line 8, strike “(7)” and insert “(8)”.